

3-2011

marD2011

Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

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## Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "marD2011" (2011). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 198.  
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We go slow in this country  
because we don't know what to do  
or where to go, but It tells us  
to keep moving so what else is there  
but one foot after another pausing  
frequently to look at other people  
clueless as I am, or at bright objects  
set out to catch my eye along no way.

15 March 2011

## **ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?**

Am I all right?  
I am, but with a good deal  
of left thrown in  
and a horse that won't mind me  
and two girls I picked up last night  
three decades back won't let me sleep  
and I have to hold my house up all day long  
with the weight of a waxing moon  
heavy on my head  
and don't forget the stars  
and all the bodies I pray to  
in the deep curvature of the night.

15 March 2011

= = = = =

Nothing waiting to do me.

Ink, a lapse. And light

sneaking the window

where would I be

without holes in things?

Some days I want

and am simple.

Others I forget

and just study what's

there. Here.

This astonishing does me.

15 March 2011

## READING MONTAIGNE

Reading Montaigne. The stars came out,  
hills everywhere. As if the wheel  
invented men to roll it. We  
are the handmaids of gravity,  
nature's henchmen, hermits  
hiding in the crowd. I admit  
the impossibility of being. I am  
capable of nothing and do everything.  
Where is the world when you need it?  
Women in that end of the province  
tend to be handsome and wise. Once  
I had a vineyard and the vines  
bore grapes that turned all by themselves  
into wine right in the fruit, something  
to do with weather and sugar and light,  
waiting, birds fell drunk to the grass  
where all my servants sprawled.  
Chemistry is unreliable to a fault.  
Time is always interfering. A salt  
solution behaves differently at night.  
Fact. And ghosts walk down my corridors.

15 March 2011

= = = = =

Sutures

stitching

**x** to **y**—always

the same unknowns

whose values

inconstantly vary—

one more blue thing

a wet slate roof.

16 March 2011

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Prescient, the eyes  
turn to where the light  
an eyeblink later  
goes on.

Faster  
than the speed of light  
the thought to see.

16 March 2011

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Stroke the rain

everything looks back  
with my own eyes

\*

We both belong to the same seeing  
eyelessly vivid

a drum beating in a vacuum

nothing to hear.  
Nothing to fear.

16 March 2011



= = = = =

Nine hens for Saint Patrick  
some flying some roosting  
in an apple tree, why  
always are groups larger  
(smaller) than the other  
always a patch of skin exposed  
if we are people,  
even Irish who once  
upon an era went  
into battle naked, only  
one gold ring round their throats,  
nine hens in the yard  
of someone else's farm  
I have no truck  
I have skin, I don't eat  
much chicken, there is a grief  
in eating animals or really  
eating anything at all,  
what did the world ever  
do to me that I should ravin it  
o Manichean? All right.  
A day is nearby, a day  
to swear by, one more  
equal-night afoot—  
remember the Oracle Chicken in Chinatown,

how many lives did she foretell,  
prophecy the actual?  
She could be any bird—  
how many bird cries come true?  
Down by the bridge a five-star eagle  
floats dangerous above the ice-boats,

why not each thing another thing?  
the only mathematics in the world  
deals with the relationship between  
a bird in flight and its shadow—  
what else is worth knowing,  
know that and all the rest is known,  
the gates of Byzantium fly open at your call.

17 March 2011

= = = = =

If I ever told you what really happened  
it would not have happened  
it would only have been told.  
Something has only one chance to exist,

you can say it or you can day it.  
That's why windows are so important—  
you sit there and stare out and decide.

17 March 2011

## RIDDLES

(1)

At least listen again.  
A boat cracks against the dock—  
that's easy,  
                    the bird  
screams in the rigging—  
name the captain.

Every riddle is insoluble,  
yields some answer  
but leaves a residue  
of image, surmise  
of what could have been,  
what could still be  
besides all the things it  
is or seems to be,  
the radiant residue  
left out of the answer.

All the wrong answers  
love us too, all  
the almost right ones  
come telling us the truth,  
the song, the goods,

the captain is named John  
or James, Peter is fishing,  
they have brought in  
bass and bluefish.  
But why is the sun in the sky?

17 March 2011

(2)

Volume of flowers

solve by conic section

inverted pyramid

out of my blue vase

small mountain lilies

pale, purple as afterthought

enduring morning sunlight,

this flower lasts

as many hours as there are petals

in the mass of them,

scentless, full of freshness, light.

17 March 2011

(3)

Among nearby things  
what is nearer than air  
thinner than water  
brighter than fire?

(4)

Who let the man in  
who speaks in the child's voice  
when the newborn  
says human words?

17 March 2011

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Every language  
has its own god.  
Or gods. The  
Dioscuri, the twin  
gods of English.  
The lonely, lovely,  
gods of Greece.

17 March 2011



= = = = =

There are no foods in the temperate  
we must you and I  
dine upon extremities of deed and grief  
and so outstretch beside  
each other's dream space  
an open door  
into the unslept morning be with me.

17 March 2011

(5)

*(Riddles)*

Dreary common room of the Departed Club  
whose members “broke the telephone”  
that is, had passed out of our space  
still speaking. And here they spoke still  
and the living come to listen.  
I was one of them, still alive I think.

17 March 2011

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Be sure a boat  
some after things  
the wake we leave  
in coming through  
the forest where  
the Other People  
still live, the ones  
with fur and wings  
we think but actually  
they are clothed  
in thought alone  
real as we are  
as we are. The trees  
are watching us me's.

18 March 2011

= = = = =

Colors taught by flowers maybe  
the bar too crowded to decide  
prematurely grey or excess of youth  
she spindles your attention and  
whatever you are or have  
reaches out to near her—who  
knows what the boundary of  
a person is, how far you have to go  
inside to touch them at all?  
Repeat this observation till  
she notices, he acts, she reacts,  
they go away. The way people  
do. Rats in crowded cages  
grow combative even without drink.  
And all that music and the lights!

18 March 2011

**FOR SAINT JOSEPH**

before I forget, the Italians  
are waiting, jostled together  
on the shores of Troy  
to escape from history

it never happened,  
and the man  
your wife made  
came into it  
when all the rest of us were trying to get away.

You let him,  
you let everything happen that had to,  
Troy, Lascaux, Deer Park, Calvary  
to bring the mind to perfect light

the way we tear this moment free from history.

19 March 2011